

and their heroic resistance to Russia, has always been close to my heart.

And also, I note that past is prologue.

The same justifications Putin used for invading Crimea—that they were going in to liberate Russians—was the exact same pretext used in Georgia. What a lie and deception that was and is. Putin simply seeks to reconstitute the Soviet empire under himself.

So I'm very supportive of the intent behind the legislation.

I had offered an amendment at markup, which was voted down on strictly partisan lines, which I believe would have made this legislation more precise and also improved its chance for passage in the Senate.

Simply put, I had offered an amendment that would have replaced the vague and imprecise “serious human rights abuses” language with the phrase “Gross violations of internationally-recognized human rights,” which has a long-standing, defined meaning in U.S. law, as codified in the Foreign Assistance Act, 22 U.S.C. 2304(d)(1).

To wit, “gross violations of internationally recognized human rights” includes “torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, prolonged detention without charges and trial, causing the disappearance of persons by the abduction and clandestine detention of those persons, and other flagrant denial of the right to life, liberty or the security of the person.”

The reason this is relevant is because recently, our colleagues across the aisle sought to import the imprecise “serious human rights abuses” language into the Global Magnitsky Act, and again had rejected offers to negotiate compromise language that would have tied such abuses to specific treaties the United States had ratified, such as the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Convention Against Torture.

As a result, that held up passage of the Global Magnitsky Act, which otherwise had broad bipartisan support in the Senate, and caused a stalemate until the parties agreed to revert to the previous, precisely-defined “gross violations of internationally-recognized human rights” language.

Similarly, this Georgia bill otherwise enjoys broad bipartisan support, but for the vague and imprecise formulation, which now will likely have to be fixed in the Senate.

I also note that I had tried to find a solution which could have kept the “serious human rights abuses” language, but would have tied it to abuses that were specified elsewhere in the legislation so as to avoid vagueness, namely “detentions, kidnappings, and other human rights violations committed in the Georgian regions of Abkhazia and Tskhinvali Region/South Ossetia forcibly occupied by the Russian Federation including [] recent killings” and similar violations of human rights.”

My colleagues across the aisle, I anticipate will again say that we have used “serious human rights abuses” in other country- and region-specific legislation. Leaving aside the fact that that was before the recent attempted Global Magnitsky partisan end run, I would also point out that “serious human rights abuses” were tied to specific abuses specified in the legislation at issue.

Thus in past legislation we called out “serious abuse or violation of human rights against persons associated with the protests in Nicaragua that began on April 18, 2018,” or “seri-

ous human rights abuses connected with forced labor” in Xinjiang.

That was all that we were asking for here—either adopt a precise statutory definition, “gross violations of internationally-recognized human rights,” or tie “serious human rights abuses” to what is specified in the legislation.

But instead, we got a party line vote and a raw exercise of power, marring what should have been a unified statement of support of the Republic of Georgia and opposition to the butcher Vladimir Putin.

I have been in Congress for over 40 years. I have been in the minority, and I have been in the majority. On bills like this, we used to try to find unity.

I am sad to say that the raw exercise of political power that we have seen with regard to both the Global Magnitsky bill and this Georgia Support Act, and the unwillingness to seek compromise in the face of legitimate concerns that an ideologically-driven administration could use vague language to pursue an agenda that is not shared by over half the country, has disappointed me.

I am not going to oppose this bill, given the larger context of support for the oppressed people of Georgia. Majorities come, and majorities go. I wish that my colleagues across the aisle had been willing to compromise and find common ground, but they did not.

With passage, it is on to the Senate.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CONNOLLY) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 923, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. ROY. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to section 3(s) of House Resolution 8, the yeas and nays are ordered.

Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion are postponed.

EXPRESSING SUPPORT FOR MOLDOVA'S DEMOCRACY, INDEPENDENCE, AND TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY AND STRENGTHENING UNITED STATES AND MOLDOVA RELATIONS

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 833) expressing support for Moldova's democracy, independence, and territorial integrity and strengthening United States and Moldova relations, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 833

Whereas the Republic of Moldova gained independence from the Soviet Union in 1991;

Whereas the United States established diplomatic relations with Moldova on February 18, 1992, and the 2 countries have since enjoyed expanded and positive relations;

Whereas United States assistance to Moldova and the Strategic Dialogue between

the United States and Moldova, which was launched on March 3, 2014, has strengthened the relationship between the 2 countries and focused on advancing shared interests in democracy, good governance, rule of law, anticorruption, energy independence, economic development, and security cooperation;

Whereas Congress and State and local communities have a history of engaging with Moldovan young leaders, civil society, and Members of Parliament through official exchanges;

Whereas Moldova ratified an association agreement containing comprehensive free trade provisions with the European Union in 2014 and the agreement became fully effective in July 2016;

Whereas Moldova's main trading partner is the European Union;

Whereas Moldova is a member of the European Union's Eastern Partnership;

Whereas since the Russian Federation's unprovoked full-scale invasion of Ukraine on February 24, 2022, Moldova has opened its border to refugees fleeing Ukraine;

Whereas, on March 3, 2022, Moldova submitted an application to become a member of the European Union;

Whereas the Moldovan 2020 Presidential and 2021 parliamentary elections resulted in a government with a mandate to fight corruption, reinvigorate economic reforms, enhance judicial independence, revitalize European integration efforts, and strengthen relations with the United States;

Whereas, in November 2020, Moldova elected its first female President, Maia Sandu, and since August 6, 2021, women serve as both Moldova's head of state and head of government;

Whereas according to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe's Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, the most recent elections were “well administered, competitive and fundamental freedoms were largely respected”;

Whereas in a judgment in 2004, the European Court of Human Rights found that Moldova's separatist region of Transnistria was created with the support of the Government of the Russian Federation and considered it “under the effective authority or at least decisive influence” of the Kremlin;

Whereas the United States supports the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Moldova and on that basis participates as an observer in the “5+2” negotiations to find a comprehensive settlement that will provide a special status for Transnistria within Moldova's internationally recognized borders;

Whereas the Government of the Russian Federation maintains a contingent of military forces and a stockpile of military equipment and ammunition within the Transnistrian region constituting an occupation of Moldovan territory and a violation of Moldova's territorial sovereignty;

Whereas the Council of Europe, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe Mission to Moldova, and the Government of Moldova have called upon the Kremlin to remove its troops from the territory of Moldova;

Whereas, in July 2017, the Moldovan Parliament adopted a declaration calling on the Kremlin to withdraw its troops from Moldova;

Whereas, on September 22, 2021, Moldovan President Maia Sandu addressed the United Nations General Assembly and called for the Kremlin to withdraw its troops from the Transnistrian region;

Whereas Moldova has been a valued and reliable partner in promoting global security

by participating in United Nations peace-keeping missions in the Central African Republic, Kosovo, and South Sudan, supporting United States efforts to increase international cooperation in combating terrorism, and providing demining units and postconflict humanitarian assistance in Iraq;

Whereas, since 1996, Moldova's Armed Forces have participated in the United States National Guard State Partnership Program as a partner to the North Carolina National Guard, which led to the creation of the Moldova-North Carolina Bilateral Partnership, which has facilitated cooperation in the areas of civil emergency operations, expansion of markets, coordination of humanitarian efforts and cultural, scientific, and academic exchanges;

Whereas Moldova cooperates with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization through the Partnership for Peace program, including participation in the Defense and Related Security Capacity Building Initiative, a flagship defense reform partnership focused on reforming and modernizing Moldova's Armed Forces to improve expertise, interoperability, and peacekeeping capabilities; and

Whereas, on September 21, 2021, President Biden addressed the 76th United Nations General Assembly stating that the democratic world "lives in the proud Moldovans who helped deliver a landslide victory for the forces of democracy, with a mandate to fight graft, to build a more inclusive economy": Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) urges the United States Government, European Union, and other transatlantic partners to increase cooperation, coordination, and support for the Republic of Moldova's democratic development, economic and energy independence, and efforts to root out corruption;

(2) reaffirms that it is the policy of the United States to support the sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity of Moldova and the inviolability of its borders;

(3) affirms Moldova's sovereign right to determine its own partnerships free of external coercion and pressure, and affirms Moldova's right to associate with the European Union or any regional organization;

(4) encourages increased activity related to the Strategic Dialogue as a means to strengthen relations between Moldova and the United States;

(5) supports the Joint Commercial Commission between the United States and Moldova to strengthen the bilateral trade and investment relationship between the 2 nations and improve Moldova's investment climate;

(6) encourages the United States Government to engage at a leadership level to enhance United States partnerships with the Government of Moldova and civil society organizations;

(7) encourages the Secretary of State, the Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development, the Chief Executive Officer of the Development Finance Corporation, the Secretary of Energy, and the United States Trade Representative to increase and focus assistance on justice sector reform, strengthening democratic institutions, promoting an open and transparent government, fostering indigenous independent media and an open information environment, increasing domestic energy development, diversification of energy supplies and energy efficiency, improving transport and communication infrastructure, as well as the promotion of trade and investment opportunities, along with inclusive economic growth focusing on the rural areas beyond the capital;

(8) commends Moldova's efforts to take in Ukrainian refugees and urges increased assistance by the United States, European Union, and other allies and partners to Moldova to assist with those efforts;

(9) reaffirms the importance of free, fair, and transparent elections in Moldova;

(10) urges the Secretary of State, the Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development, the Chief Executive Officer of the United States Agency for Global Media, and other heads of Federal departments and agencies to continue to work with the Government of Moldova and Moldovan civil society to strengthen independent media and combat Russian disinformation and propaganda;

(11) calls upon the Government of the Russian Federation to fulfill its commitments made at the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe's Istanbul summit in 1999, and to withdraw its military forces and munitions from within the internationally recognized territory of Moldova;

(12) calls upon the Government of the Russian Federation to refrain from military and economic threats to Moldova and cease any and all actions that support the so-called "authorities" in the separatist region of Transnistria;

(13) supports a results-oriented 5+2 process as a constructive format for resolving the Transnistria conflict through a comprehensive settlement that secures Moldova's sovereignty and territorial integrity; and

(14) affirms that lasting stability and security in Moldova is in the strategic interest of the United States and that these can only be achieved if the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Moldova and all European countries are respected.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CONNOLLY) and the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. MEUSER) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Virginia.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H. Res. 833, as amended.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Virginia?

There was no objection.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise today in support of H. Res. 833, which clearly champions Moldova's push toward democracy and our common work in strengthening our bilateral ties.

I first thank my colleague, Representative PRICE of North Carolina, for drafting this important measure and his years of work on the House Democracy Partnership.

Moldova, a small country in Europe, nested between Ukraine and Romania, rightfully deserves our attention today. After centuries of being fought over and by larger neighboring powers, the country is making strides toward democracy, combating deep-seated corruption, and moving closer to the Euro-Atlantic community.

With the Russian invasion in Ukraine, the stakes are now so much

greater. Indeed, more than 400,000 Ukrainian refugees have arrived in tiny Moldova since February, a number that represents more than 10 percent of Moldova's own population.

Furthermore, Moldova is no stranger to malign Russian influence and interference. Transnistria, a Kremlin-backed breakaway region in Moldova's east, is an area of active risk. Moscow uses this wound to manipulate fears and politics in Moldova. We are reminded of that constant potential with the explosion in the region earlier this week and the constant dangerous rhetoric from the so-called authorities there.

Thankfully, despite these challenges, the Moldovan Government is in a position to tackle them and advance an agenda to modernize and democratize its society and its economy.

President Maia Sandu and the parliament in Moldova are ambitiously fighting corruption and implementing needed reforms, all while strengthening relations with the European Union and with the United States.

The Moldovan people's good work to build a stronger democracy is admirable and deserves our full support, especially today; and passing this resolution, coupled with the Biden administration's highlighting of Moldova's progress during the Summit for Democracy, sends a strong signal that the entire United States Government stands with them.

This resolution looks to build on the momentum in this decisive moment from Moldova, ensuring that the progress is meaningful and sustainable. I support this resolution, and I urge all of my colleagues to do the same.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
Washington, DC, April 22, 2022.

Hon. RICHARD NEAL,
*Committee on Ways and Means,
House of Representatives, Washington, DC.*

DEAR CHAIRMAN NEAL: I am writing to you concerning H. Res. 833, Expressing support for Moldova's democracy, independence, and territorial integrity and strengthening United States and Moldova relation, as amended. I appreciate your willingness to work cooperatively on this legislation.

I acknowledge that provisions of the bill fall within the jurisdiction of the Committee on Ways and Means under House Rule X, and that your Committee will forgo action on H. Res. 833 to expedite floor consideration. I further acknowledge that the inaction of your Committee with respect to the bill does not waive any future jurisdictional claim over the matters contained in the bill that fall within your jurisdiction. I also acknowledge that your Committee will be appropriately consulted and involved as this or similar legislation moves forward, and will support the appointment of Committee on Ways and Means conferees during any House-Senate conference convened on this legislation.

Lastly, I will ensure that our exchange of letters is included in the Congressional Record during floor consideration of the bill. Thank you again for your cooperation regarding the legislation. I look forward to

continuing to work with you as the measure moves through the legislative process.

Sincerely,

GREGORY W. MEEKS,
Chairman.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS,
Washington, DC, April 25, 2022.

Hon. GREGORY MEEKS,
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Affairs,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN MEEKS: In recognition of the desire to expedite consideration of H. Res. 833, Expressing support for Moldova's democracy, independence, and territorial integrity and strengthening United States and Moldova relations, the Committee on Ways and Means agrees to waive formal consideration of the bill as to provisions that fall within the rule X jurisdiction of the Committee on Ways and Means.

The Committee on Ways and Means takes this action with the mutual understanding that we do not waive any jurisdiction over the subject matter contained in this or similar legislation, and the Committee will be appropriately consulted and involved as the bill or similar legislation moves forward so that we may address any remaining issues within our jurisdiction. The Committee also reserves the right to seek appointment of an appropriate number of conferees to any House-Senate conference involving this or similar legislation.

Finally, I would appreciate your response to this letter confirming this understanding, and would ask that a copy of our exchange of letter on this matter be included in the Congressional Record during floor consideration of H. Res. 833.

Sincerely,

RICHARD E. NEAL,
Chairman.

Mr. MEUSER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise today in support of H. Res. 833, which expresses support for Moldova's democracy, independence, and territorial integrity and calls for strengthening U.S. and Moldova relations.

Needless to say, this is an especially opportune time to consider this resolution; not only because this year marks the 30th anniversary of diplomatic relations between our two countries, but also given the ongoing Russian aggression against Ukraine and the challenge it poses to other countries in the region, including Moldova.

Moldova's humanitarian response to Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine and its generosity have been truly remarkable. For example, Moldova has accepted nearly 434,000 Ukrainian refugees. To put that into perspective, that is around 5 percent of Moldova's entire population.

Not only does this resolution commend Moldova's strong support for Ukraine, but also commits the U.S. to continue to assist Moldova in addressing the economic impacts of the crisis, its energy security, and advancing democratic reforms.

I urge all my colleagues to join me in supporting this resolution to show that the U.S. Congress is committed to a long-term partnership with Moldova.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MEUSER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, I thank Representatives PRICE and PFLUGER for their work on this resolution.

Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine is making the whole of Europe less secure. U.S. support for our allies and partners must therefore extend to Ukraine's neighbors, like Moldova.

The ominous threat made by a Russian general last week that the Kremlin aimed to seize a land bridge from the Donbas to Odesa and then to Transnistria, the Russian-supported breakaway region in Moldova, shows why the U.S. must pay close attention to Moldova and its security.

Therefore, I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this resolution to demonstrate the U.S. Congress' strong support of our friends in Moldova.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, again, I thank my friend for his bipartisan leadership and his support for this important piece of legislation.

Again, combined with the Georgia Support Act, this resolution sends a clear message from this body, on a bipartisan basis, that we will not tolerate Russian aggression in Europe in 2022.

Combined with our solidarity in opposition to the tragedy unfolding in Ukraine, it is a powerful message, backed up with, of course, support by our government, and the bipartisan nature of this is just so critical.

The people of Moldova, and the people of Georgia, and the people of Ukraine, they are watching and they are listening, as we hope is Vladimir Putin and his cronies in Moscow.

I urge support for this resolution, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CONNOLLY) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 833, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. ROY. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to section 3(s) of House Resolution 8, the yeas and nays are ordered.

Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion are postponed.

TRANSATLANTIC TELECOMMUNICATIONS SECURITY ACT

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3344) to prioritize the efforts of and enhance coordination among United States agencies to encourage countries in Central and Eastern Europe to improve the security of their

telecommunications networks, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3344

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Transatlantic Telecommunications Security Act".

SEC. 2. SENSE OF CONGRESS; STATEMENT OF POLICY.

(a) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) fifth and future generation's telecommunication networks in allied and partner countries based on common, secure, transparent, democratic standards have the potential to increase cultural, political, and economic exchanges leading to mutual job creation, closer citizen relations, and stronger democratic institutions;

(2) Russia's unprovoked, unjustified, and illegal invasion of Ukraine and the People's Republic of China's tacit support for Russian Federation's actions demonstrate the importance of secure telecommunication infrastructure in Central and Eastern European nations;

(3) the United States has national security and economic interests in assisting Central and Eastern European countries to improve the security of their telecommunication networks by reducing dependence on covered telecommunication equipment or services that are often offered with predatory economic inducements and replacing them with secure telecommunication equipment or services;

(4) China's Belt and Road Initiative and the 17+1 Initiative seek to undermine Central and Eastern Europe's infrastructure resilience and sovereignty through predatory inducements from state-linked providers of telecommunication equipment or services such as Huawei Technologies Company and ZTE Corporation;

(5) China's 2017 National Intelligence Law obligates Chinese businesses to fully cooperate with state intelligence work, and thereby compromises the integrity of any network that utilizes equipment from Chinese companies because providers could be forced to hand over sensitive data or shut down networks at the command of China;

(6) Russia's campaign to elect a Russian national, who is a former Huawei Technologies Company executive, to serve as the Secretary-General of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) is indicative of China and Russia's efforts to use international organizations to promote their interests and their malign influence;

(7) at global fora such as the ITU, the United States Government should actively support candidates that espouse democratic values, internet freedoms, and secure telecommunication networks;

(8) the United States International Development Finance Corporation's development priorities, as described in section 1412 of the Better Utilization of Investments Leading to Development Act of 2018, properly includes a focus on less developed countries;

(9) the United States should assemble a coalition of democratic and like-minded allies and partners to counter the rise of global malign actors such as China and Russia and build resilience in Central and Eastern Europe against malign influences; and

(10) in order to ensure robust military coordination and interoperability with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and transatlantic allies and partners, the United States should ensure that allies and